

# Greenwich House Independent School

## Child Protection Policy and Procedure for School, Kindergarten and Crèche

Greenwich House Independent School, Kindergarten and Creche (“Greenwich House”) is committed to providing a safe and secure environment for every child attending and will work within the guidelines laid down by the local safeguarding partners, the Lincolnshire Safeguarding Children Partnership (the website for which can be found at the following link - <https://www.lincolnshire.gov.uk/safeguarding/lscp>) and current government guidance including but not limited to the following:-

**What to do if you are worried a child is being abused – Summary’ (DCSF publication)**(which can be found at the following link - <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/what-to-do-if-youre-worried-a-child-is-being-abused--2>);

**Keeping Children safe in Education - statutory guidance for schools and colleges (September 2021)**(which can be found at the following link - <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/keeping-children-safe-in-education--2>);

**the Statutory Framework for the early years foundation stage (31st March 2021 and effective 1<sup>st</sup> September 2021)** (which can be found at the following link - <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/early-years-foundation-stage-framework--2>) including including (when active) the Early years foundation stage: coronavirus disapplications; and,

**Working Together to Safeguard Children -A guide to inter-agency working to safeguard and promote the welfare of children -July 2018** (which can be found at the following link - <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/working-together-to-safeguard-children--2>)

This policy should be read with Greenwich House’s other policies and relevant documentation. For staff, this will include Greenwich House’s Staff Code of Conduct, Staff Disciplinary Procedures, the Terms of their Contract of Employment, Job Description, Social Media and Digital Policy (which incorporates Greenwich House’s Acceptable User Policy) and Equal Opportunities Policy. Where the nature of their concerns about the behaviour of other members of staff demands it, staff members should refer to Greenwich House’s Allegations Against a member of staff procedures and Whistle Blowing Policy. At the time of the review of this policy, additional procedures and practices are being followed in respect of **Coronavirus Covid-19** and this policy should be read in light of and subject to these procedures and practices. These procedures and practices have, where appropriate, been provided to employees, parents and carers and pupils as well as other effected parties.

The Children’s Act of 1989 acknowledges that children can find it difficult both to speak on their own behalf or to understand the decision making processes involved once they offer a disclosure.

Schools / Kindergartens / Crèches, are perfectly placed to be involved in maintaining the welfare of children through a personal / social education programme. Such

programmes can help children to increase their personal safety by developing their assertiveness skills, raising their self esteem and giving them an understanding of unacceptable adult behaviour. Greenwich House's Curriculum incorporates such programmes and is reviewed always with these issues in mind.

Teachers and other staff in schools have daily contact with children. They are therefore in a good position to observe the physical and behavioural signs of abuse.

Greenwich House also acknowledges that, as an educational setting, it is not an investigative agency and must refer any suspicions to Children's Services.

The school has two Child Protection Officers / Designated Safeguarding Leads (Mrs Michelle Morley and Mrs A Brindle and referred to below as DSLs) whose responsibility is to carry out and act using the following procedure (save that where appropriate staff members should refer to Greenwich House's Allegations Against a member of staff procedures and Whistle Blowing Policy where the nature of their concerns about the behaviour of other members of staff demands it.) Should a member of staff suspect, or a child disclose or show signs of abuse, they should immediately inform one of the DSLs.

The DSL will in the first instance interview the parties concerned and make an assessment of the known facts.

In making her decision, she will take into account the fact that all staff have had professional training in the identification of child abuse.

1. If the DSL concurs with the source (s) of suspected abuse, which in all but exceptional cases will be automatic, *Children's Services (on 01522 554403)* will be informed immediately and receive the full cooperation of the school. Where appropriate, the DSL will notify the registration body (Ofsted) of any circumstances affecting the wellbeing of a child and in the event of an allegation being made against a member of staff or volunteer (whether the allegations relate to harm or abuse committed on the premises or elsewhere). Greenwich House will cooperate fully with Ofsted.
2. Greenwich House acknowledges its legal duties detailed in *Keeping Children safe in Education - statutory guidance for schools and colleges (September 2021)* and in the *Statutory Framework for the early years foundation stage (31<sup>st</sup> March 2021 and effective 1<sup>st</sup> September 2021)* to refer relevant cases to the DBS and Secretary of State.

## **Confidentiality**

Confidentiality is always important, but in cases where child abuse is suspected, it is essential. Whenever concerns are raised or worrying changes are observed in a child's behaviour, physical condition or appearance, a specific record will be set up. Any written notes (time and date to be included) need to be passed on to your supervisor and ultimately, the School Head Teacher and stored securely away. Any conversation or information that you have heard must be kept confidential. Passing on information which is confidential could harm the very children who need protecting.

Notwithstanding the need for confidentiality, it should always be borne in mind that Data Protection requirements do not prevent or limit Greenwich House from the essential sharing of information for the purposes of keeping children safe. Subject to

appropriate safeguards being in place, information may be shared with colleagues, other schools, Children's Services and other local agencies for this purpose. Consent is not required to share this information if the obtaining of consent places a child at risk. If in any doubt, please speak with the Child Protection Officer.

**Good Practice – Helping Abused Children (N.B. See also Appendix)**

- Reassure the child that you believe them and that you want to help them.
- Listen carefully to what the child is saying. You will need to write it down afterwards.
- Do not ask a child questions. Where a criminal act has taken place, the police may find it hard to prosecute if there is any doubt that a child has been influenced by what an adult has said to them.
- Do not promise the child that you can keep this a secret. This is unfair on the child because you are not able to do so. Say to the child that you need to talk to other people so that they can help.
- Reassure the child that they are not to blame for what has happened to them.
- Report what has been said to a supervisor immediately and write down the times and what was said in as much detail as possible but stick to the facts as disclosed. You will also need to write down any incident that led up to the disclosure and who was present.

**Categories of Abuse (N.B. See also appendix at rear of this Policy)**

The four main categories of abuse which may lead to registration are:-

- Physical abuse
- Emotional abuse
- Sexual abuse
- Neglect

There are also specific safeguarding issues:

- Children and the Court System
- Children missing from education
- Children with family members in prison
- Child sexual exploitation - (see Child sexual exploitation - Definition and a guide for practitioners, local leaders and decision makers working to protect children from child sexual exploitation - February 2017)
- Child criminal exploitation - county lines
- Domestic abuse
- Homelessness
- Honour-based abuse
- Preventing radicalisation - see separate Prevent Duty Policy
- Peer on peer abuse

- Sexual violence and sexual harassment between children in schools and colleges
- Upskirting
- Alcohol abuse
- Bullying including cyberbullying (see separate policies for Anti Bullying and E-safety)
- Child missing from home or care
- Domestic violence
- Drugs
- Fabricated or induced illness
- Faith abuse
- Gangs and Youth Violence
- Gender Based Violence / Violence Against Women and Girls (VAWG)
- Hate
- Health and well-being
- Mental Health
- initiation/hazing type violence and rituals
- Missing Children and Adults
- Private fostering
- Relationship Abuse
- Sexting/Trafficking
- Online
- Serious Violence
- Female Genital Mutilation

According to Keeping Children Safe in Education (para 23) "All staff should be aware that safeguarding incidents and/or behaviours can be associated with factors outside the school or college and/or can occur between children outside of these environments. All staff, but especially the designated safeguarding lead (and deputies) should consider whether children are at risk of abuse or exploitation in situations outside their families. Extra-familial harms take a variety of different forms and children can be vulnerable to multiple harms including (but not limited to) sexual exploitation, criminal exploitation, and serious youth violence." This is called Contextual Safeguarding.

All staff will be given access to part 1 of Keeping Children Safe in Education (September 2021) . They will read this as part of their safeguarding training.

All staff are trained to understand our safeguarding policies and procedures and parents are made aware of them too. All staff understand that safeguarding is their responsibility. Staff have an up-to-date knowledge of safeguarding issues, are alert to potential indicators and signs of abuse and neglect and understand their professional duty to ensure safeguarding and child protection concerns are reported to the local authority children's social care team or the NSPCC. They receive updates on safeguarding at least annually.

All staff are confident to ask questions in relation to any safeguarding concerns and know not to just take things at face value but can be respectfully sceptical.

Enhanced criminal records and barred lists checks and other suitability checks (including, if appropriate, section 128 checks in respect of persons prohibited from management roles in independent schools) are carried out for staff and volunteers prior to their post being confirmed.

All staff and volunteers are expected to disclose any convictions, cautions, court orders or reprimands and warnings which may affect their suitability to work with children (whether received before or during their employment with us).

From 31 August 2018, staff and volunteers in childcare settings that are not based on domestic premises are **not** required to notify their line manager if anyone in their household (including family members, lodgers, partners etc.) has any relevant convictions, cautions, court orders, reprimands or warnings or has been barred from, or had registration refused or cancelled in relation to any childcare provision or have had orders made in relation to care of their children. Staff should notify Greenwich House, however, if any relationship or association they have may pose a risk to Greenwich House's safeguarding procedures.

The order of procedure in school should adhere closely to the following agreed and legally binding sequence of events. This emphasises the key role of the school in the initial identification of abuse and how, in the later stages, the school becomes a supportive body, monitoring the child to the point where, hopefully, he or she becomes de-registered should the threat be eliminated:-

### **Order of Procedure**

1. Discovery of injury, disclosure, or suspicion of abuse or neglect.  
Immediately inform one of the DSLs (Mrs Michelle Morley and Mrs Arran Brindle).
2. Immediate medical treatment if necessary.
3. The procedure set out in the flow chart on page 23 of Keeping Children Safe in Education September 2021) will be followed where there are concerns about a child.

### **Child Protection Register**

The school should be notified of any pupil whose name is on the Child Protection Register. This alerts the school to observe the child's attendance, development and behaviour.

### **Supporting Families**

We acknowledge that parents will be the first point of contact and they will be informed of any suspicions **unless** this is deemed likely to put a child at risk.

Greenwich House Independent School, Kindergarten and Crèche, through the Safeguarding Policy, will inform parents of their role and responsibility regarding safeguarding children.

We will continue to welcome children and work with parents throughout any investigation.

## **Staff Accused of Abuse**

In cases where staff are accused of abuse, please refer to Greenwich House's Allegations Against A Member of Staff and Greenwich House's Whistleblowing Policy for advice on how to address this situation.

## **Use of cameras, mobile phones and social networking sites**

The school's Staff Social Networking and Digital Policy should be read in conjunction with the school's Safeguarding Policy. Greenwich House also has a Policy for Parental use of Social Networking and Internet Sites

## **Car Parking, Arrival and Collecting Routines**

**The procedures for car parking, arrival and collecting routines are as at the time of writing subject to the alternative practices set out which have been made available as appropriate to staff and parents and carers.**

During dropping-off and collection times, cars should be parked on the car park at the rear of the school. Parents and/or carers should enter the Kindergarten and School through the gate leading from the car park towards the rear of the school.

Alternatively, if walking, parents and/or carers should enter through the pedestrian access gate to the side of the school building. Parents / carers of children attending the Creche may use the white door at the front of the building and should ring the door bell provided for access. The gates will be locked during session times to promote the safety of the children. We therefore would request parents and/or carers arrive promptly to avoid having to walk to the front entrance.

At the beginning of session times, parents and/or carers should hand their child over to the member of staff responsible for their child's room. Parents and/or carers should never simply leave their child in the building.

Parents and/or carers should forewarn staff if their child has suffered a recent injury or if they suspect that they may be a little 'off colour'.

**\*Parents should not take their child to the toilet. If a child requires the toilet on arrival or departure parents are asked to inform a member of staff who will accompany them.**

If someone else other than the child's parent or carer is to collect a child, parents and/or carers should let their child's key person/teacher know in advance, stating the name of the person who is to collect them, their relationship to them and a brief description. Parents and/or carers will also be asked for a password which the person will be required to provide before entry into the school. **Without such information, we will in no circumstances hand your child over until the identity of the third party has been confirmed by the child's parents and/or carers.**

**Advice and concerns regarding safeguarding children should be directed to:**

- Lincolnshire Safeguarding Children Partnership Customer Service Centre:  
Office Hours: Tel. 01522 554403  
Out of Hours: Tel. 01522 782333
- Lincolnshire Police: Tel: 999 in an emergency or 101

- Ofsted: Tel. 03001231231

### **Pupils emergency contact:-**

Given the age of the children attending Greenwich House it may be unlikely that they will have their own facility to or seek to make contact with the school by telephone with any concerns they have or to request help and guidance. Hence, it is vital that members of staff are alert to their responsibilities of care and to remain approachable to pupils who may require their help. Nevertheless, if pupils require emergency assistance, they can contact the school in an emergency on 01507 609252.

Pupils may also wish to contact Childline on 0800 1111.

.....Head Teacher

Date: June, 1999

Reviewed October 2016

Reviewed August 2017

Reviewed October 2018

Reviewed September 2019

Reviewed September 2020

Reviewed September 2021

## **Appendix**

Our sole purpose for existing is to promote and maintain the care and education of our children. It therefore follows that each and every member of staff has a duty to protect each child in their care from any event or influence which may harm them. It is with this in mind that our Child Protection Policy has been designed.

Clearly working together with parents / carers and their children is by far the best way to help children and their families in times of stress. It is equally vital that there are easy communication flows both between agencies concerned with the welfare of children and between individual professionals.

This document is designed to provide clear guidance if you are unsure what to do. It can be summarised very simply as:-

- Become familiar with this code of practice.
- Ask Mrs Michelle Morley or Mrs Arran Brindle (the DSLs) for advice, stating your concerns clearly. These concerns should never, for obvious reason, be articulated in the hearing of other children or adults. Failure to follow this important procedure could have serious legal implications and also hinder the very process established to protect the child.

**Please remember that the difference between child abuse and child protection could be you.**

Children need you to:

- See them
- Hear them
- Protect them

Individual factors or indicators of child abuse may not be particularly worrying in isolation, but in combination they can indicate that there is cause for serious concern.

What to do if you're worried a child is being abused sets out some of the signs that might be indicators of abuse or neglect between pages 5 and 10 of that document (the link for which is provided above). Part 1 of Keeping Children Safe in Education also sets out similar indicators (the link for this document is also provided above) The following may also be indicators of possible abuse:-

#### **Indicators of possible abuse - Parental Behaviour**

- Inappropriate sexual comments
- Inappropriate sharing of images
- Signs of alcohol and drug abuse
- Have you noticed any change in the presentation or behaviour of the parents?
- Are the parents distancing themselves from the staff?
- Have the parents lost interest in their child's development and learning?
- Are the parents late delivering or collecting the child?
- Are they sending other people to collect the child?
- Are parents falling behind with payments?

#### **Indicators of possible abuse – staff behaviour**

- Inappropriate sexual comments
- Excessive one-to-one attention beyond the requirements of their usual roles and responsibilities
- Inappropriate sharing of images
- Signs of medication and substance misuse

#### **Definitions of Abuse**

**Ref: *Keeping Children Safe in Education - September 2021***

##### **Physical abuse:**

**A form of** abuse which may involve hitting, shaking, throwing, poisoning, burning or scalding, drowning, suffocating, or otherwise causing physical harm to a child.

Physical harm may also be caused when a parent or carer fabricates the symptoms of, or deliberately induces, illness in a child.

##### **Emotional abuse:**

is the persistent emotional maltreatment of a child such as to

cause severe and persistent adverse effects on the child's emotional development. It may involve conveying to children that they are worthless or unloved, inadequate, or valued only insofar as they meet the needs of another person. It may include not giving the child opportunities to express their views, deliberately silencing them or 'making fun' of what they say or how they communicate. It may feature age or developmentally inappropriate expectations being imposed on children. These may include interactions that are beyond the child's developmental capability, as well as overprotection and limitation of exploration and learning, or preventing the child participating in normal social interaction. It may involve seeing or hearing the ill-treatment of another. It may involve serious bullying (including cyberbullying), causing children frequently to feel frightened or in danger, or the exploitation or corruption of children. Some level of emotional abuse is involved in all types of maltreatment of a child, though it may occur alone.

### **Sexual abuse**

Sexual abuse involves forcing or enticing a child or young person to take part in sexual activities, not necessarily involving a high level of violence, whether or not the child is aware of what is happening. The activities may involve physical contact, including assault by penetration (for example, rape or oral sex) or non-penetrative acts such as masturbation, kissing, rubbing and touching outside of clothing. They may also include non-contact activities, such as involving children in looking at, or in the production of, sexual images, watching sexual activities, encouraging children to behave in sexually inappropriate ways, or grooming a child in preparation for abuse (including via the internet). Sexual abuse is not solely perpetrated by adult males. Women can also commit acts of sexual abuse, as can other children. The sexual abuse of children by other children is a specific safeguarding issue in education.

### **Neglect**

Neglect is the persistent failure to meet a child's basic physical and/or psychological needs, likely to result in the serious impairment of the child's health or development. Neglect may occur during pregnancy as a result of maternal substance abuse. Once a child is born, neglect may involve a parent or carer failing to:

- provide adequate food, clothing and shelter (including exclusion from home or abandonment);
- protect a child from physical and emotional harm or danger;
- ensure adequate supervision (including the use of inadequate care-givers); or
- ensure access to appropriate medical care or treatment.

It may also include neglect of, or unresponsiveness to, a child's basic emotional needs.

### **Conclusion**

As professional child carers and teachers, we must be vigilant at all times should we suspect that a child is being abused or is at risk in this respect. Most cases of suspected abuse are quickly explained and are found to have no substance. However, there are exceptions and the interests of the child must always come first.

For this reason, it is vital that one of Greenwich House's DSLs (Mrs Michelle Morley and Mrs Arran Brindle) is told immediately of any suspicions of abuse that you may

have. This will ensure that the matter is thoroughly investigated with the child's welfare as paramount.

No member of staff should contemplate 'going it alone' as this can have a devastating effect on parental relationships should things go wrong and even more importantly, can prevent instances of acute abuse being successfully dealt with.

The DSLs will at all times make it a priority to listen at length to any concerns colleagues may have.

The approach should always be direct to one of the DSLs. Never feel obliged to consult other members of staff first. This is time consuming and can blur the issue. Speed, discretion and sensitivity are needed in order to deal professionally with this important aspect of our duties of care to the children we teach.

If a staff member feels that their concern is not being taken seriously they have every right to share their concerns with the Lincolnshire Safeguarding Children Partnership customer services unit and/or to the Police without affecting their terms of employment (see Whistle Blowing Policy).